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Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities

Statement submitted by VIVAT International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2005/100.

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Good practices of VIVAT International in fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals

1. ***Working to End Racism in the 21st Century, Chicago, Illinois, United States of America***: Mary Miller works on anti-racism in Chicago and is a member of an anti-racism group. The members are dedicated to eradicate racism in their society by conducting trainings and teaching skills of analysis to the teachers, school administrators and support personnel. So far they have covered 40 schools in Chicago.

2. ***Agro-Ecological School among Mba'e Katu Indigenous People, Paraguay***: This school for the Mba'e Katu Indigenous People started in March 2001, with 50 students coming from 10 communities of the Etnia Ava Guarani. The project consists of cultivating coffee and fruits like pineapple, banana, citrus, etc. through the selective clearing method (cutting only some trees without burning). The project is primarily a training ground for the students who are expected to help their respective communities towards poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

3. ***HIV/AIDS Prevention and Rehabilitation in Udon Thani, northeast Thailand***: Since 1997 VIVAT members in Udon Thani, Thailand, have been engaged in educating and creating awareness with regard to HIV/AIDS by organizing health camps in the community and schools. VIVAT also has established homes for the HIV/AIDS affected children and is managing a hospice for caring for the dying adults.

4. ***Poverty Eradication and Women Empowerment, Pune, Maharashtra, India***: "Streevani", an organization for the empowerment of women, is engaged in direct poverty eradication through Self-help Groups and MicroCredit. Besides MicroCredit, it also provides legal aid and various types of trainings to women, including on leadership, income generation activities, capacity-building and also helps the people in benefiting from Government programs.

VIVAT Recommendations:

- ***Women's empowerment should be placed on top of the agenda of development***. They should have an equal share in all of the policymaking and implementation processes. There needs to be a considerable amount of investment in the education of girls and women. The Government and Civil Society should encourage small-scale enterprises and self-help groups for and by women, through microcredit and microfinance. Microcredit has helped women to enter into the workforce, manage their life better, and do so with dignity.
- An all-out effort needs to be made both by the developed and developing world to ***address the existing HIV/AIDS pandemic with urgency*** and to prevent its further spread. The available and donated money needs to be utilized by the Governments concerned in a speedy manner.
- ***Greater importance needs to be given to the development of LDCs***. We call for immediate 100% cancellation of the debt of the poorest countries. We also urge the developed world to fulfill the promise of 0.7% of their GDP as the Official Development Assistance to the developing countries, and to have most of that amount reach the LDCs. We request the developed world to stop subsidies to their farmers at the expense of the commodities from the poor world, and to remove trade barriers to the goods coming from LDCs.
- ***Special emphasis needs to be given to the development of the Indigenous Peoples***, teaching them new skills in tune with their capacities and developing leadership from among them, and treating them as equal partners in policymaking processes that affect their lives.
- Governments and Civil Society together will have to ***work towards ending racial discrimination in day-to-day life situations.***